

New York State
Council on the Arts

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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

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MOTION PICTURE, BROADCASTING
AND RECORDED SOUND DIVISION

TDD # 212-387-7049
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March 12, 1993

Library of Congress
M/B/RS Division
Washington, D.C. 20540
Attn: Steve Leggett

Dear Mr. Leggett:

The New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) has long recognized the enduring importance of film as an art form and the significance of Americans' contributions to the development of the medium. Countless early films were produced in New York and the preservation of our film heritage remains of vital concern to the Arts Council as has been demonstrated by the Council's support to nationally recognized film archives located in New York State.

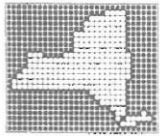
In the 1980s the Council provided upwards of \$100,000 annually towards preservation lab costs in New York. The Anthology Film Archives, the George Eastman House and the Museum of Modern Art were the primary beneficiaries of these funds. Smaller awards to other organizations allowed for the striking of circulating prints for the American Federation of Arts' Before Hollywood tour, Dr. Musser's annotated catalog of the work of Edison, the preservation of 16mm films of Jewish life in pre-WW2 Eastern Europe collected by YIVO and the preservation of the experimental film work of performing artist, Meredith Monk.

The Council has been particularly interested in encouraging archives to work with distributors to reintroduce preserved films to scholars and the public. Council funding to this important area of activity and preservation in general has been drastically reduced for the past four years due to overall budget cutbacks.

During the State's current fiscal crisis, NYSCA has directed fewer dollars to this important work. Unfortunately, film prints continue to decay. With fewer dollars available, the institutional infrastructure for preservation has also been eroded. NYSCA is very interested in seeing continued development of archival resources, better access to materials and

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greater attention paid to diversifying and increasing the number of professionals being trained in preservation. NYSCA would also like to see increased support for preserving the work of independent artists. Their work is often at greatest risk of vanishing.

We ask that you share your findings with us. The study will help us develop a more informed policy for State funding over the coming decade.

Sincerely,

Kitty Carlisle Hart,
Chairman

Deborah Silverfine,
Director, Electronic
Media & Film Program